



## Private sector responds to call for education

In October 2003, the Justice Information Network (JIN) Program Office issued a Request for Information (RFI). The RFI expressed the goal of understanding the nature and scope of what it might mean to develop an integration solution for the state—the task that the law has essentially assigned to the governance structure for JIN (the Integrated Justice Information Board).

When the RFI was issued, there was considerable skepticism as to what might result. It asked for assistance with some complex questions, as well as for a proof-of-concept, to be delivered at no cost to the state. Compounding internal fears of the questionable desirability of filing a response, many of the subsequent technical questions asked about what kind of request for proposal (RFP) would follow. In answer, the Program Office had to admit that an RFP was not a certainty, and that it was dependent on securing funding—in a state already strapped for cash.

While the arrival of the first response on December 19 allayed fears that no-one would be interested, the arrival of the eighth response created ones that the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) might be overwhelmed by the mountain of information that now needed to be reviewed.

The proposals, all extremely well prepared and brimming with both general and specific information offered a variety of possible solutions, many of which were already working in other states or

local jurisdictions. From data warehouses to enterprise service bus (ESB) technology, an array of choices and strategic directions were presented for review.

After meeting to discuss the proposals, the TAG agreed to invite four of the respondents to make presentations. For the most part, solutions that were judged as overly proprietary or more centralized in nature were seen as less desirable than more open, diffused models, which might help individual agencies or jurisdictions to work independently in a collaborative environment.

The presentations, which were held on February 3, were again, extremely well done and informative. Of the four vendors, two, Equarius<sup>1</sup> (in partnership with Microsoft) and Online Business Systems<sup>2</sup> (in partnership with Sonic Software) were invited to collaborate on proof-of-concept projects for the state. Both of these companies are already doing significant integration work in the state, Equarius with King County, Online with the city of Seattle, and both demonstrated expertise in both the current environment in Washington and the steps by which a statewide integration effort ought to proceed.

The Equarius proposed solution uses Microsoft Biz Talk server and XML-based technologies to share data between diverse systems. Their proof of concept, development efforts for which are just getting underway at this time, proposes to publish

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# State Patrol planning to improve data sharing capabilities

Since 1999, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) has been working to implement the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) 2000 functions. NCIC improves the data and function of data sharing among local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. As discussed below, there are substantial steps still to be made but the end result will benefit all law enforcement.

NCIC 2000 adds numerous database capabilities to NCIC. These include information linking which will allow one query to retrieve associated records. For example, a person burglarizes a house, stealing guns and a vehicle. A warrant is issued on the person and the guns and vehicle are entered into their corresponding WACIC files and linked together. When any one of the items (including the person) is located, all files are displayed without having to make multiple entries. Other enhancements include:

- ◆ Lost guns
- ◆ Convicted Person on Supervised Release (similar to Washington Crime Information Center's – WACIC - Correction Client File)
- ◆ Digital graphic capabilities that provide fingerprints, mug shots, pictures of identifying scars, marks, and tattoos and signatures.
- ◆ Enhanced name search and date of birth near hit inquiry capability.

The financial impact to local law enforcement will be varied. WSP will be updating ACCESS (A Central Computerized Enforcement Service System) communication switch and the WACIC database to NCIC 2000. WEBMSS will be updated concurrently with no cost to its users. Those users utilizing a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) or records management via a regional interface will need to update those systems to obtain the benefits of NCIC 2000. The type of system and its current configuration will determine the final cost to agencies.

Full NCIC 2000 functionality includes upgrading communication protocol to TCP/IP, and programming for new and expanded formats, functions, and fields. WSP has upgraded to TCP/IP and implemented the NCIC 2000 "National Sex Offender Registry" (NSOR) file. In the near future, as other functions are changed to the NCIC 2000 format, the transactions will use the new message header format.

Thirty seven states are currently at full NCIC 2000 functionality. Washington is one of the 13 states that requested an extension for implementing NCIC 2000.

The WSP expects the upfront cost for implementing all NCIC 2000 functions to be over \$1.5 million. This cost includes permanent programmers needed to maintain and update the system without heavy reliance on outside vendors. In 2002 the WSP attempted to secure state funding for the NCIC 2000 updates. Although the budget proposal was supported by Office of Financial Management (OFM), it did not make the final budget. The proposal will be updated and resubmitted. In the meantime, WSP is seeking other federal grants for funding implementation of NCIC 2000.

Once WSP has obtained funding and work begins on the NCIC 2000 project, agencies using a regional interface to their CAD or records management system will be notified of required changes to their systems. They will be allowed ample time to transition to the new formats. ACCESS will accept both old and new formats for the transition period. ◆

data from the State Patrol system as a web service, which will facilitate its exchange in a variety of ways with members of the justice community.

The Online system uses ESB technology to develop a suite of exchanges in an open architecture. Their proof of concept, which is also still in the planning phase, proposes an exchange of citation data among the Seattle Municipal Court, the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Department of Licensing.

Both of these projects offer an opportunity to demonstrate that the technology can work and that integration can be accomplished in a multifaceted

environment with minimal impact on existing systems. The viability of each and the willingness of the state to embrace and fund a collective solution, still remain to be seen, but the JIN has taken an important step toward turning its vision of improving public safety by providing criminal justice practitioners with complete, timely and accurate information, and improving operating efficiency by facilitating the integration of disparate systems throughout the state into a reality. And it has done so thus far at no cost to the state. ♦

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.equarius.com>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.online-usa.com>



## The NEWS

### **Puget crime agencies to share data**

Northrop Grumman Corp. officials announced the company won a contract to design and implement the Law Enforcement Information Exchange (LInX) system for state, local and federal agencies in the Puget Sound region. (View full story at <http://www.fcw.com/geb/articles/2004/0119/web-linx-01-20-04.asp>)

### **New Global Justice XML Listserv**

The Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global) Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM) Listserv is an electronic forum created to develop and broaden the community of Justice XML expertise and support for the application of the GJXDM and the Global Justice XML Data Dictionary (GJXDD) elements. (View the full story at [http://it.ojp.gov/topic.jsp?topic\\_id=92](http://it.ojp.gov/topic.jsp?topic_id=92))

### **Significant increase in criminal investigations involving computer technology**

The dramatic increase of personal computing in the United States has led to the unprecedented use of computers in the commission of major crimes. (View full news release at <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/newsfaqs/releases/nr010504c.pdf>)

### **States' crime database a privacy threat**

A seven-state crime database launched with \$12 million in federal funds is a more powerful threat to privacy than its organizers acknowledge, the American Civil Liberties Union alleged after obtaining documents relating to the program. (View full article at [http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2004-01-22-aclu-vs-matrix\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2004-01-22-aclu-vs-matrix_x.htm))

### **Maryland launches Info-Cop Network to net crime on Eastern shore**

Several departments in four Maryland counties have created a shared information system built on Info-Cop's wireless software solution. The new system provides real-time access to local, state and federal crime databases over a wireless network. (View full story at <http://www.govtech.net/news/news.php?id=88074>)